

REMARKS

A final Office Action, dated March 31, 2003, rejects pending claims 1-39. Claims 1, 8, 21, 31 & 38 have been rewritten herein. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Objections

Applicants have removed the term "commercially available" from claims 8 and 31 in conformance with the examiner's comments.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 103

Applicants respectfully traverse the examiner's rejection of claims 1-5, 9-23, 25, 28-29, 31-35, 37 and 37 as being rendered obvious by Hanson et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,349,497) in view of Harrison (U.S. Pat. No. 6,184,804). Neither reference alone or in combination teach or suggest the structures of the present invention as currently claimed.

As explained more fully in the specification of the present application, among other benefits, the adjustability of the handle with respect to the base allows the user to easily position the handle at a comfortable position in both a forward and rearward direction and side-to-side direction relative to the base. This adjustability is accomplished by the sliding member being slidably secured to the base and the handle being slidably secured to the sliding member.

In contrast, Hansen et al. neither teaches nor suggests such structures. While the handle in Hansen et al. may be slidably received in the base, such connection does not appear to be positionable in different forward and rearward

positions relative to the base. Rather and as best shown in FIG. 12 of Hansen et al. (below), the disclosed structures are aimed at pivoting the handle forward and rearward relative to the base.

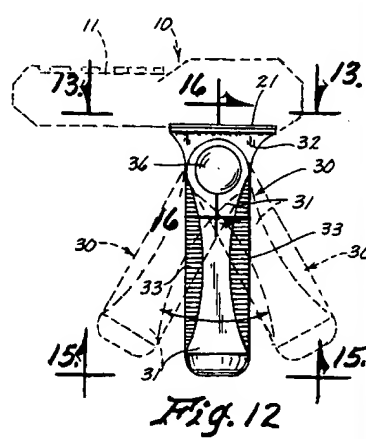
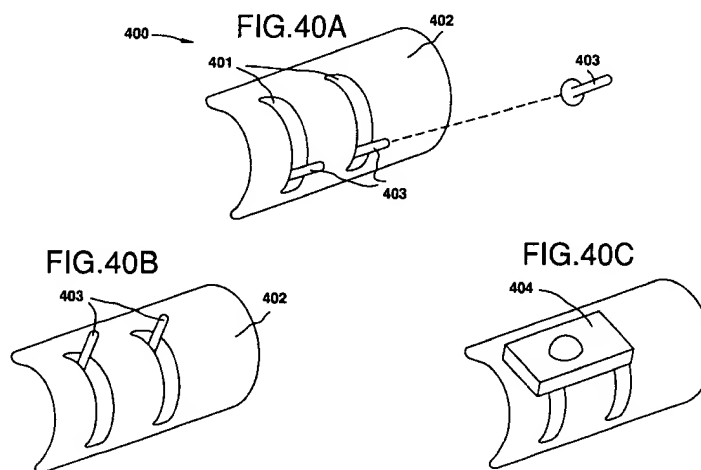


FIG. 12 of Hansen et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,349,497). While these structures allow some degree of adjustability of the handle relative to the base, they do not provide the movement and related range of adjustability of the present invention.

Similarly, FIGS. 40A-D of Harrison, which are cited by the examiner as purportedly showing a "portable computer [that] is slidably movable to a first and second direction orthogonally from the computer-mounting portion." (March 31, 2003 Office Action, page 3, lines 6-7) actually shows no such structure.



FIGS. 40A-C of Harrison (U.S. Pat. No. 6,184,804). Rather and as shown above, Harrison teaches using a set of a rods 403 mounted to parrallely aligned slots 401 to allow a "key housing mount" 404 to move up and down only along a first direction of movement.

While other disclosed structures in Harrison also teach or suggest rotatably securing the key housing mount or the like to a single direction sliding frame (see, for example, FIGS. 41D to K), there is no teaching or suggestion to provide any structures that allow a portable computer to be detachably secured to a slidable handle assembly that provides a handle that is moveable as currently claimed in the present application.

Claim 1:

Turning to the claims of the present application, claim 1 (as currently amended) now specifically requires "a sliding member slidably secured to said computer-mounting portion such that said sliding member moves relative to said computer-mounting portion along a defined first direction;" and "an elongate handle slidably secured to said sliding member such that said elongate handle moves relative to said sliding member, independent of movement of said computer-mounting portion in said defined first direction, along a defined second direction, said second direction substantially orthogonal to said first direction, said elongate handle extending substantially orthogonally from said computer-mounting portion."

Claim 21:

Similarly, claim 21 (as amended) now specifically requires "a sliding member slidably secured to said base such that said sliding member moves relative to said base along a defined first direction" and, "an elongate handle having a base mounting portion and a handle grip portion, said base mounting portion slidably secured to said sliding member such that said elongate handle moves relative to said sliding member along a defined second direction, said defined second direction being substantially orthogonal to said defined first direction, wherein said handle grip portion infinitely adjustable in at least two directions with respect to said base;" (emphasis added)

Claim 31:

Also, claim 31 has been amended to substantially include these limitations. In particular, claim 31 now includes a limitation that "said handle independently moveable in a first direction and a second direction along the general plane, said first direction being substantially orthogonal from said second direction." (emphasis added).

The examiner has correctly noted that the improvements of the present invention "would be an improvement of the teaching of Hanson et al. and provide more options to the customer as to where to position the handle in relation with the base portion when carrying out the slide-in apparatus and advantageously to balance the weight distribution by choosing a desired center of gravity while allocating the handle." (March 31, 2003 Office Action, page 3, lines 10-15). However, the only teaching provided for this type of structure is in the applicants' present application. No references of record teach or suggest such a combination of structures.

Since neither Hansen et al nor Harrison teach or suggest these limitations of the present independent claims 1, 21, and 31, these claims cannot be anticipated or rendered obvious by them and they should now be in condition for allowance. Moreover, since all remaining claims of the application (2-20, 22-30 and 32-39) depend on these now allowable claims, they too should now be in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections of Claims 6 under 35 USC § 103

Applicants respectfully traverse the examiner's rejection of claims 6 as being obvious by Hanson et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,349,497) in view of Koenck et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,410,141). There is no teaching or suggestion to the combination of elements as currently claimed in claim 6.

Traversal of Examiner's comments regarding the type of portable computer used
with the present invention


Applicants respectfully traverse the examiner's comments that the term "commercially available, general purpose" is somehow admitted prior art for purposes of interpreting the claims. Applicants maintain that while such devices like PDA's and the like are themselves quite common, using them in combination with the handle assembly of the present invention to replace known hand-held trigger-activated scanning devices certainly is not.

The "brick on a stick" disclosed in Koenck et al. is not a "general purpose" portable computer as currently claimed. Koenck et al. discloses a single function, overpriced, scanner, which is the very structure the present invention allows a consumer to avoid buying. Rather, the present invention provides a common, general purpose, portable computer with the functionality of a professional, single purpose, hand-held scanner for a fraction of the price. Applicants have amended claims 8 and 31 to clarify this distinction between a single purpose "brick on a stick" and a general purpose portable computer.

In view of the foregoing, applicants submit that all of the currently pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request that the case be passed to issuance. If the Examiner has any questions, he is invited to contact applicants' attorney at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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